



SUCCESS STORY

Opening the Door for Business

Entrepreneurship gets boost after registration process is streamlined



An officer with the Patents and Companies Registration Office in Zambia helps a customer register his business at the newly automated customer service center.

"I fully expected the registration process to take me many days. I am surprised at how simple the registration has been and how soon I can start operating my new business." said entrepreneur Prosper Chanda, of Katetebo Enterprises.

Telling Our Story
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After three years of working, Prosper Chanda decided it was time to start his own sign company, but wasn't sure how to register his business. The registration process could be long, expensive, and frustrating; many entrepreneurs faced similar challenges. Although all businesses are legally required to register in Zambia, many avoided registering because the process was too costly and lengthy. The World Bank estimated that registering a new business took up to 35 days in Zambia, with 10 of those days due to the registration process at the Patents and Companies Registration Office.

After the registration office opened a new, fully-automated customer service center in the capital city, Lusaka, with USAID support, the situation has improved. Zambian business owners can now register a new business or file annual registration updates in less than three days.

The transparent and automated process reduces opportunities for corruption. Transaction fees are clearly displayed, thus removing the dependence on middlemen who demanded huge sums of money from customers to expedite the process.

Since the center opened, the number of registrations increased by more than 50 percent in one year. USAID has helped open satellite offices in Ndola, and two additional locations will open outside Lusaka.

At the new customer service center, Prosper was able to register his new company, Katetebo Enterprises, in one day. He received clear and simple guidance on how to keep his registration current through annual updates. Now as a registered business owner, he has access to financial loans and business development services. By streamlining the business process in Zambia, USAID is helping to boost economic activity and transparency.